

Introduction

KIN College is an independent special school, providing education for students with neurodivergent needs.

The Anti-bullying policy and related procedures are to be applied considering factors related to each student's disability/needs that may impact their behaviour(s) towards others. Some of the factors related to a student's disability that may impact their ability to meet the expectations of the school context including appropriate interactions with others may include; cognitive functioning, complex communication needs, lower inhibition, difficulty problem solving, difficulty reading social and emotional cues, and sensory sensitivities.

This policy is informed by and aligned with the Anti-Bullying Framework for NSW Schools, ensuring that KIN College implements evidence-based, whole-school approaches to preventing, identifying and responding to bullying in ways that are developmentally appropriate and disability-affirming.

Students' behaviour(s) towards others listed under the heading Types of Bullying (below) are considered in relation to the definition of bullying which notes the ongoing deliberate misuse of power, and intention to cause harm.

The KIN College supports the development and maintenance of respectful behaviours through Positive Behaviour Support strategies and Wellbeing interventions using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). This is embedded into the whole school learning for each student

Purpose

KIN College believes that all members of the community have the right to a learning and working environment free from intimidation, humiliation and harm. We share a collective responsibility to create a culture of care that does not tolerate bullying. This policy builds on the School's Pastoral Care and Wellbeing frameworks to provide clear, consistent procedures for:

- preventing bullying
- responding to bullying behaviours
- supporting all parties involved
- maintaining a safe, respectful and inclusive environment

KIN College seeks to provide an environment that is secure, caring, and physically, emotionally and intellectually safe, where students can fulfil their potential.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- all students
- all staff
- parents/carers
- volunteers, contractors and visitors
- all school-related settings, including online environments

The School rejects all forms of bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination and takes all allegations seriously. All members of the School community contribute to preventing bullying by:

- modelling respectful behaviour
- teaching and reinforcing positive interactions
- being alert to signs of bullying
- reporting concerns promptly

The School works collaboratively with students and their families to resolve incidents of bullying.

Definition of Bullying

The National definition of bullying for Australian Schools (bullyingnoway.gov.au) is the ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/ or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Types of bullying:

- Verbal bullying which includes name calling or insulting someone about their physical characteristics such as weight or height, or other attributes including race, sexuality, culture, or religion

- Physical bullying which includes hitting or otherwise hurting someone, shoving or intimidating another person, or damaging or stealing their belongings
- Social bullying which includes consistently excluding another person or sharing information, images or other digital content that will have a harmful effect on the other person.
- Verbal, physical and social bullying can occur in person or online, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly.
- Direct bullying includes behaviours which are obvious and easily observed by others, that is, the identity of the person displaying bullying behaviours is usually known. Examples of direct bullying include pushing, kicking, name calling and excluding others from social activities.
- Indirect bullying is not always immediately observable and acknowledged as bullying. Indirect bullying can be discreet and anonymous, and the person experiencing the bullying behaviour may not realise until after it has occurred. Examples of indirect bullying can include damaging another person's social reputation, relationships and self-esteem through actions such as jokes shared with a group demeaning someone's personal attributes, discreetly stealing personal belongings from a bag or anonymously sharing unflattering images or information online without that person's permission.
- Overt bullying involves physical actions such as punching, kicking or pushing, or observable verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting. Overt, direct, physical bullying is a common depiction of bullying (this is sometimes called 'traditional bullying').
- Covert bullying can be challenging for people outside the interpersonal interaction to identify. It can include repeatedly using hand gestures and weird or threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with.

What bullying is not:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.
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These actions can cause great distress. However, they do not fit the definition of bullying and they're not examples of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them and intentionally using power over a peer.

Prevention and Whole-School Approach

KIN College implements a proactive, disability-affirming approach to preventing bullying through:

- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- explicit teaching of social-emotional skills
- visual supports and structured routines
- staff training in trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming practice
- supervision in all school environments
- digital citizenship education

The School promotes a culture of respect, inclusion and safety.

Reporting Bullying

Students, parents/carers and staff are encouraged to report any allegations or incidents of bullying.

Reports may be made:

- directly to staff
- via email or phone
- through wellbeing meetings
- through incident reporting processes

All reports are taken seriously and responded to in accordance with the Anti-Bullying

Procedures.

Responding to Bullying

When bullying is reported or suspected, the School will:

1. Ensure immediate safety of all students involved
2. Gather information from all relevant parties
3. Consider disability-related factors that may influence behaviour
4. Determine whether the behaviour meets the definition of bullying
5. Implement appropriate responses, which may include:
 - restorative conversations
 - targeted wellbeing support
 - Positive Behaviour Support planning
 - increased supervision
 - parent/carer meetings
 - individualised interventions

6. Provide support to the student experiencing bullying
7. Provide support and intervention for the student displaying bullying behaviours
8. Monitor and review the situation

Responsibilities

School Leadership

- ensure compliance with legislation and the Anti-Bullying Framework
- implement whole-school prevention strategies
- ensure staff training
- oversee investigations and responses

Staff

- model respectful behaviour
- supervise students effectively
- teach social-emotional and behavioural skills
- report and respond to concerns

Students

- treat others with respect
- seek help when needed
- report bullying

Parents/Carers

- support the School's approach
- communicate concerns promptly
- work collaboratively with staff
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The KIN College takes bullying seriously and recognises the potential harm it can cause both physically and psychologically.

The school implements its Anti-Bullying Procedures for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying.

Students, parents/carers and staff are encouraged to report any allegations or incidents of bullying to the school in accordance with the anti-bullying procedures.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Anti-Bullying Procedures
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- Discipline Policy and Procedures
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy and Procedures
- Wellbeing Policy and Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Framework for NSW Schools
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- NSW Education Act 1990

Resources

- Bullying No Way
- Kids Helpline
- eSafety Commissioner: Online Safety
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